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Governor Seeks Disaster Declaration for Flood Damage

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard has requested a Presidential Disaster Declaration to help South Dakota recover from widespread spring flooding.

The request is for public assistance in 28 counties where preliminary assessments show flooding caused damages estimated at more than \$7.1 million to roads, culverts, bridges and other public infrastructure.

In a letter to President Barack Obama, Gov. Daugaard said soil in many parts of the state already was saturated before the winter of 2010-2011 brought snowfalls ranging from 50 to 100 inches.

“Overland, lake and riverine flooding has inundated public recreation areas, washed out roads and culverts, damaged bridges and cut off access to homes,” the Governor said in the letter. “Of particular concern is the fact that, in several locations, emergency traffic is unable to travel the impassable roads.”

South Dakota received seven Presidential Disaster Declarations in 2010. Those disasters stretched state and local budgets to the limit, Gov. Daugaard said.

“The costs associated with this disaster, combined with the last seven declarations in the last year, will only make budgets worse if federal assistance is not provided,” the Governor said.

The request is a necessary step for federal disaster funds to be made available to South Dakota. If the President grants the declaration, up to 75 percent of eligible infrastructure costs could be reimbursed by the federal government. The Governor’s request does not guarantee federal funding will be made available to South Dakota.

Counties included in the request are: Aurora, Beadle, Brookings, Brown, Buffalo, Clark, Codington, Day, Edmunds, Faulk, Grant, Hamlin, Hand, Hughes, Hyde, Jackson, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Lake, Marshall, Miner, Moody, Perkins, Potter, Roberts, Sanborn, Spink and Sully.

FEMA participated last week in the preliminary damage assessments, which were finalized Monday.